

# January 2017 From the Board Room

## North Carolina Public Schools

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## JANUARY 2017

The State Board of Education is comprised of the State Treasurer, the Lieutenant Governor and 11 citizens appointed by the Governor. This newsletter highlights the Board's activities on behalf of the 1.5 million public school students in our state and the more than 100,000 educators who provide services to children. You may view all State Board of Education member and advisor information [online](#). To access current and archived versions of From the Boardroom, visit the State Board of Education's [website](#).



## Math, English Standards Being Revised

### *Public Input Sought*

Setting standards – what North Carolina students should know and be able to do – is a key element of the State Board of Education's work in ensuring that students receive what they need in the classroom. Local educators use the state-adopted standards to create a curriculum to help their students meet each standard. Curriculum materials – textbooks, digital content, activities and lessons – are locally developed or selected. In January, the State Board heard updates on standards revisions for mathematics and English language arts, a process that occurs approximately every five years.

Revised standards for High School Math 1, 2 and 3 were adopted in June 2016, and implementation is in full swing in school districts. To support this work, NCDPI provided 2016 summer information sessions, in-person regional math professional development, virtual teacher support to provide “just in time” help, and curriculum leader implementation support to build a digital tool for math teachers that is dynamic and sustainable for years 2 and 3.

Work is underway now to review and revise the K-8 mathematics standards and also standards for the “fourth math” in high school. These “fourth math” courses can include Advanced Functions and Modeling, Essentials of College Math, Discrete Math and Pre-Calculus. (Advanced Placement and

International Baccalaureate math standards are established by The College Board and International Baccalaureate.) This work includes surveying college and university mathematics professors, school district math leaders and mathematics teachers statewide. NCDPI mathematics staff expect that major revisions will be needed for some of the fourth math courses. New standards will be presented to the State Board of Education for action.

The K-12 English language arts revision process began in 2016, and a draft of these revisions is expected to be presented to the Board in spring 2017. Public input is invited through an [online survey](#). Nearly 300 educators have provided feedback at eight regional meetings; approximately 5,000 responses were received to the educator English language arts survey. In considering the English language arts standards, 17 of 481 standards received an approval rating below 80 percent.

## Every Student Succeeds Act Update

With the new state submission deadlines in place for the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), North Carolina has revised its development timeline and is on track to submit the North Carolina plan to the US Department of Education in September 2017. Over the next six months, NC Department of Public Instruction staff are conducting simulations of different accountability models to help finalize the North Carolina's draft accountability model; continuing to receive feedback and input on the draft plan; presenting the plan to General Assembly Education Committees and meeting with lawmakers and staff; providing monthly updates to the SBE and submitting the plan to the Governor for his review. The plan will be finalized in July to be on track for State Board approval in September. Considerations still in play include what additional (non-test dependent) accountability measure to include and how to measure English learners' progress on the English Proficiency Assessment.



## Public Schools' Connectivity on Track for June 2018 "Completion"

North Carolina public schools are rapidly connecting to the Internet to provide access to digital tools for teachers and students, thanks to North Carolina's school connectivity model that links MCNC's client network engineering and NCDPI's support for accessing federal E-rate funding. This information was provided in a School Connectivity Update to the January State Board of Education meeting.

Peak public school Internet usage is double the combined internet usage of community colleges, the University of North Carolina system and North Carolina private and independent colleges. The school connectivity program is currently a \$125 million program per year with \$32 million in state funds and \$93 million in federal funds. This initiative is on track to provide complete Wifi connectivity in classrooms by June 2018. Key 2016 accomplishments include

- upgrading Internet access to 46 school districts and 100 charter schools;
- providing firewall services to 75 districts and 95 charters;
- providing web security (Internet filtering) services to 79 districts and 92 charters;
- supporting 51 districts and 40 charter schools with client network engineering support services; and
- managing a wireless infrastructure and services procurement supporting more than \$55 million in purchases for 72 districts and 25 charters.

North Carolina's Digital Learning Initiative (DLI) is focused on improving processes, providing digital learning content and setting priorities for future versions of Home Base, the suite of digital tools provided to local schools and districts. Activities of this joint project between NCDPI and the NCSU's Friday Institute include: facilitating cooperative purchasing and ensuring that digital content aligns to North Carolina content standards; exploring open education resources as a content resource; highlighting the needs for digital content specific to elementary school science (earth systems), middle school social studies (informational text) and high school mathematics. Future activities of the DLI include constructing a Home Base Portal to provide one sign-in access to the digital tools in Home Base; updating state policies to modernize and align textbook and digital course review processes; deploying a new Home Base informational website; and updating the NC Digital Learning Data Dashboard.



The State Board welcomed two new faces at the Board table, the recently elected State Superintendent Mark Johnson and recently elected Treasurer Dale Folwell. Johnson outlined his core principles that will guide his work and leadership of the

Department of Public Instruction: urgency to address shortcomings of schools and needs of students, ownership of the Department's work and impact on local student opportunity, and innovation to better meet the needs of today's students. Johnson indicated that he would initiate a listening tour to visit districts and communities across North Carolina.

SBE Highlights: A [checklist](#) of Board actions is posted every month at the conclusion of the meeting. The State Board of Education's next meeting will be held Feb. 1-2 in the 7th Floor Board Room, Education Building, 301 N. Wilmington Street, Raleigh, NC. Board materials will be available online by clicking on the Meetings tab.



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